/1296 cont./

776 in their dreams, tells them many things" /cited in English/ (259).
756

259. And again at (k):238: "The yecamush claims to have dealings with beings called yapahchel, and they are the ones who give him the power to see and do fabulous things, especially to cure and to kill" /translated from Spanish/.

In BD:661 one reads: "Yapčal, a being of more than human power and sagacity whom the yékamuš claimed as their inspiring power and instructor" /cited in English/. If, referring to this, Bridges believes that this designation also means "spirits of men, especially such as have been killed by violence" /cited in English/, I must reject this as inaccurate. A special relationship between a yékamuš and his Yefčel is universally recognized, and it will be discussed below. Here it should merely be pointed out that there is a belief in thumb-sized guardian spirits, from whose large number every person is assigned his Yefčel for the rest of his life.

### b. Forms of Superstition

781 Several groups of definite spirits have just been named and described. These are not independent beings which actually exist, but are present only in Yamana belief. To this extent they must be regarded as objects of superstition. For various reasons they were treated separately, first of all, because each group is an individual, definite phenomenon. This is not true of the figures which appear in dreams and the many superstitious views which are linked with some definite circumstance.

#### 1. Dreams

781 The fact that the Yamana dream a great deal must be traced
• 157 back to their alertness in everyday life and to their very vivid imagination. Almost every morning one of the adults in a family

/1296 cont./

but will relate his dream. It is not regarded as unusual for someone who is suddenly awakened in the middle of the night by a vivid dream to wake up his family and tell them about it. A yékamuf may even call out to all the neighboring huts from his bed and announce to the people what he just experienced in a dream, although this is generally without any significance to outsiders. It will be explained below how much the yékamuf pursue their calling in dreams. The Yamana believe that the very frequent dream images come by themselves to ordinary people, and everyone is very much concerned about them /1297/ (260).

260. Hyades (q):253 says briefly: "Dreams are frequent, but in general no one seems to attribute any meaning or importance to them" /translated from French/. Only the first part of this statement is correct.

Everyone attributes more or less importance to a dream, depending on its content, the person's temperament, and given circumstances. There is no rule or any sort of criterion; the individual attaches more significance to one dream and less to another according to his own feeling and judgment. A person will be more vividly concerned and more excited by something that touches him directly or threatens him with grave consequences than by unimportant and insignificant everyday things. Everyone who hears about a dream accepts without contradiction the dreamer's interpretation of it. No one would ever dare minimize in any way or even reject the interpretation of a dream given by the one who experienced it and who evaluates it according to his own judgment. Anyone who is extremely disturbed about a dream turns to a yékamuf, who, for his part, will always confirm the seriousness of the whole matter and will usually prepare at once to ward off the harm threatened in the dream.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the Yamana believe implicitly in the dreams which agitate and alarm them (261).

261. Bridges (q):14 has reliably declared: "The Yahgans had great faith in dreams